

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A cabinet comprising:
 - a frame;
 - a front panel including a data port; and
 - a workshelf coupled to the frame, wherein the workshelf provides a working surface when the workshelf is in an extended position, and wherein the workshelf inhibits access to the data port when the workshelf is in a stowed position.
2. The cabinet of claim 1 further comprising a storage system, wherein the storage system is electrically coupled to the data port, and wherein the storage system may be monitored by a laptop computer connected to the data port.
3. The cabinet of claim 1, wherein the data port is an Ethernet port.
4. The cabinet of claim 1, wherein:
 - the workshelf is pivotally mounted on the frame; and
 - the workshelf covers at least a portion of the front panel when the workshelf is in the stowed position.
5. The cabinet of claim 4, wherein the front panel defines a recessed volume, wherein the recessed volume is at least partially occupied by the workshelf when the workshelf is in the stowed position.
6. The cabinet of claim 4, wherein the workshelf provides access to the data port when the workshelf is in the extended position.
7. The cabinet of claim 6, further comprising:
 - electronic equipment;
 - wherein the front panel further includes a power switch, wherein the power switch allows power to flow to the electronic equipment; and

wherein the workshelf provides access to the power switch when the workshelf is in the extended position and inhibits access to the power switch when the workshelf is in the stowed position.

8. The cabinet of claim 6 further comprising a door coupled to the frame, wherein:

the door includes a door latch positioned at the front panel; and
the workshelf provides access to the door latch when the work shelf is in the extended position and inhibits access to the door latch when the workshelf is in the stowed position.

9. The cabinet of claim 1, wherein the cabinet further comprises a rack frame, wherein the rack frame provides rack mount supports.

10. The system of claim 1, the system further comprising electronic equipment, wherein:

the electronic equipment houses the workshelf on slides positioned internally within the electronic equipment;
a majority of the workshelf is housed within the electronic equipment when in a stowed position.

11. The system of claim 1, wherein the storage system is a tape library system.

12. A cabinet comprising:

a frame;
a front panel includes a data port, wherein the front panel defines a recessed volume;
a data storage system electrically coupled to the data port, wherein the data storage system allows interfacing to a laptop computer connected to the data port;
and
a workshelf pivotally coupled to the frame, wherein

- when the workshelf is in the stowed position, the workshelf inhibits access to the data port and the recessed volume is at least partially occupied by the workshelf; and
- when the workshelf is in an extended position, the workshelf provides a working surface and provides access to the data port.
13. The cabinet of claim 12, wherein the data port is an Ethernet port.
14. The cabinet of claim 12, wherein:
- the front panel further includes a power switch, wherein the power switch allows power to flow to the electronic equipment; and
- the workshelf provides access to the power switch when the workshelf is in the extended position and inhibits access to the power switch when the workshelf is in the stowed position.
15. The cabinet of claim 12, further comprising a door coupled to the frame, wherein:
- the door includes a door latch positioned at the front panel; and
- the workshelf provides access to the door latch when the work shelf is in the extended position and inhibits access to the door latch when the workshelf is in the stowed position.
16. The system of claim 12, wherein the storage system is a tape library system.
17. A method of interfacing to a storage system wherein the storage system includes a workshelf and a front panel having a functional unit, the method comprising extending the workshelf from a first position to a second position, wherein the first position inhibits access to the functional unit, and wherein the second position provides a work surface and allows access to the functional unit.
18. The method of claim 17, wherein the functional unit is a data port.

19. The method of claim 18, further comprising:
 - positioning portable electronic equipment on the work surface;
 - coupling an electronic interconnection between the data port on the front panel and an interface on the portable electronic equipment; and
 - transmitting electronic signals along the electronic interconnection between the data port and the portable electronic equipment.
20. The method of claim 19, wherein the act of transmitting electronic signals includes sending control signals from the portable electronic equipment to the data port, wherein the control signals represent commands to control the storage system.
21. The method of claim 19, wherein the act of transmitting electronic signals includes receiving status signals at the portable electronic equipment from the data port, wherein the status signals represent a status of the storage system.
22. The method of claim 17, wherein the functional unit is a power switch.
23. The method of claim 22, further comprising activating the power switch thereby providing power to the storage system.
24. The method of claim 17, wherein the functional unit is a door latch coupled to a door of the storage system.
25. The method of claim 22, further comprising activating the door latch to open the door of the storage system.